The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accurate and authentic interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and considers other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE—
1. BILLIONS DOLLARS OF WAR BEFORE BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1739 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 1944 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 34, NO. 32

FACING the FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

In stepping down as Chairman of the Senate War Investigating Committee, Senator Harry S. Truman, Democratic Vice Presidential nominee, blamed the opposition of the armed services for "disappointing" progress in laying reconversion plans. He added that the War and Navy Departments have been "bitterly opposed to taking any action" on reconversion now.

These observations are not new but they are deeply significant in connection with collateral events.

Less than a month ago, War Production Board Chairman Donald M. Nelson tangled with the War and Navy chiefs on his program for starting reconversion where and when it would not interfere with the war effort. After a version where and when it would not interfere with the war effort. After a bitter struggle behind the scenes, Nelson won out and War Mobilization Director Byrnes authorized the start of his reconversion program by Aug. 15.

Almost immediately, a barrage of statements to the press was fired from the War and Navy Departments, warning of production shortages and claiming a serious lag in the output of specific items of war equipment needed by the fighting forces.

Raising A Furore

These statements took labor by surprise, for the public has been led to believe that the needs of the armed services were being substantially filled. It was the first information to the contrary that had been forthcoming since the very beginning of the war.

The furore raised by the armed services, aided and abetted by the press and radio, finally stampeded Byrnes into action. He issued a new decree tightening manpower controls so as to divert more labor to the industries where production allegedly had been lagging.

After a day or two, reports began creeping into newspaper stories that the new manpower controls effectively blockaded any possibility of the authorized Nelson reconversion program actually getting started. It was pointed out that manpower would not be made available for any such projects.

Simultaneously, the newspapers carried a report of the resignation of two key executives from the War Production Board. It was reported that they took this action in protest against the alleged suppression, at the request of the War Department, of data to show that there is an abundance on hand of ordnance supplies, instead of shortages.

This information, according to the reports, was to have been included in Nelson's official review of war production during the first six months of this year—but the Army yanked it out.

Now we have no way of telling whether these reports are true or whether the War Department's charges of certain shortages are true. Nor do we wish to enter into controversy with the leaders of the armed forces over a matter concerning which we have no direct knowledge.

But we feel that the situation needs investigating so that the public may get the truth and the agency to do this job should be the very committee formerly headed by Senator Truman, which he adjured to keep up its investigating activities.

Some Questions

Here are some of the matters the Senate War Investigating Committee might look into:

First, do total shortages of vital war equipment exist?

Is production falling behind on these or other items needed by our armed forces in their offensive drives?

If so, what are the causes of the production lag?

To what extent do frequently changing designs and structural changes in equipment hold up production schedules?

What is the relation between arbitrary wage freezing in certain low-paid industries, such as foundries, and the alleged shortage of manpower in these industries?

Is there any truth to the recurring reports that workers are leaving jobs in war industries to seek employment in peace-time industries which promise better job security?

The final question offers a key to the solution of a serious problem which, if it does not exist now, may crop up in the future. We have no evidence substantiating the reports that war workers are looking for more permanent jobs in fear of sudden cutbacks should the war end suddenly.

But if such fears are in the minds of war workers they are certainly justified. Thus far no provision has been made by Congress to take care of disemployed war workers. Immediate enactment of the Murray bill is necessary to keep up the morale of millions of workers whose jobs depend on the war.

Despite the increasing evidence of shenanigans behind the scenes, labor hesitates to enter into any controversy on war production until the facts are clearly established.

But we can say this—that regardless of any and all other considerations, if our armed forces need increased production of any particular items, the workers of America will do everything possible to fill the bill.

Huge Public Works Program Urged To Provide Jobs In Post-War Period

New York City.—Sensational testimony was given here by two of the nation's outstanding city planners at a hearing of the House Committee on Post-War Economic Policy on the need for creating jobs through public works programs after the shooting ends.

Mayor F. H.—LaGuardia and his park commissioner, Robert Moses, decided that after the war ends "mass unemployment" may be expected, and both predicted consequences of the most tragic nature unless measures are adopted at once to deal with the situation.

The Federal government has delayed so long in making plans that it has already "missed the bus," declared Moses, who has won national fame because of handling of huge public improvements in New York.

Mayor LaGuardia said that if workers are to be provided with jobs, it will be necessary to launch a five-year public works program costing $40,000,000,000.

While that sum may seem large, he added, it represents only a fraction of what is being spent for war.

"If we don't spend it," LaGuardia warned "I predict we will spend a great deal more in the long run and get less out of it."

Just as soon as the war blows up in Germany, which I hope will be real quick," LaGuardia told the committee, New York City is ready to go ahead with post-war plans calling for an outlay of $1,570,000,000.

But that will not be sufficient, he emphasized, saying that neither New York nor any other city in the country can finance an adequate post-war works program without Federal aid.

Declaring the war's end will bring "dislocations more serious than any thing in the history of the country," Moses urged haste in organizing a 15-billion-dollar works program to tide the nation over reconversion period.

He said his figure was more "realistic" than LaGuardia's 40-billion-dollar estimate, "because the time had run out in which to plan the spending of the greater sum."

Moses lashed out at those who contend that, because of the war debt, it would be unwise to use borrowed money to create jobs.

"If you face the situation you faced in 1933," he said, "with millions of men out of jobs, then you'll find the money. You'll either provide jobs or set up some kind of Beveridge plan (the social security scheme they are talking about in England) or double the relief load."

Emphasizing that he is "a Republican and a conservative," Moses warned the committee that "unless Democrats and Republican allies take the view that they have a responsibility for un employment, they are going to lose a lot of ground and face a lot of trouble."

With U. S. Navy Tripled In Size Leaders Tell Labor, "Magnificient"

Washington, D. C.—That action by labor speaks louder than words has been proven in an announcement by the Navy Department that on August 18 its fighting fleet will be three times as great as the number of combatant ships on hand on July 1, 1940, when the Navy's intensive shipbuilding program was inaugurated. On August 18 the Navy expects to have 1,166 combatant ships as compared with the 383 that were available when the huge construction program began a little over four years ago.

But that is only a part of the picture of the job performed by American workers during that period. Total vessels of all types in the Navy have increased many more rapidly due principally to the additions of numerous amphibious vessels. The Navy says that on June 30, 1944, it had more than ten times the number of craft of all classes, exclusive of small landing craft and small yard and district craft, that it had in commission on July 1, 1940. During the fiscal year closed June 30, 1944, the number of naval craft of all types approximately doubled.

And even this does not conclude labor's spectacular performance for the Navy. In the aircraft field, the number of Navy planes on hand at the close of the last fiscal year was almost twenty times the number on hand on July 1, 1940, and the number of planes on hand more than doubled during the 1942-44 fiscal year.

The Navy has no advance base program activity under way on July 7, 1940, and from a modest beginning late that year the program has grown to one of the Navy's major activities.

Despite this "magnificent record by labor," the Navy is asking that workers continue to "lay it on the line," citing the fact that the Navy's main fight is in the Pacific and that need for ships, planes and supplies will end only with the defeat of Japan.

News Briefs

MACHINISTS TRIUMPH IN AIRCRAFT ELECTION

Tulsa, Okla.—By obtaining 55 per cent of votes cast in an NLRB election, the International Association of Machinists (AFL) became certified collective bargaining agent of workers at the big Douglas Aircraft Co. plant here.

This is the second Douglas plant to go IAM. The first was the Douglas El Segundo plant near Los Angeles.

The IAM now represents 400,000 aircraft workers, including nearly all units of Consolidated Vultee, all units of Boeing, Lockheed, Solar and Rhor aircraft companies and nearly all units of Curtiss-Wright.

DIES INSISTS BIDDLE ACT AGAINST CIO POLITICIANS

Washington, D. C.—Representative Martin Dies formally requested Attorney General Biddle to take immediate steps to "correct" political abuses which the Texan attributed to the CIO Political Action Committee.

Dies, chairman of the House Committee on un-American Activities, said his committee has evidence indicating that the PAC "has interfered in primary elections and has spent "large sums of money to influence" the outcome.

Information gathered by his committee, Dies said, will be made available to Biddle, and unless the Attorney General acts on it by September 1, he threatened to start congressional action.

AFL WINS ELECTION AT UTAH STEEL PLANT

Provo, Utah.—A major victory for the AFL was scored here in a National Labor Relations Board election among employes of the Geneva Steel Mills. Running up 932 votes, the AFL won a clear majority over the CIO and the no-union advocates and will now move to be certified as the exclusive collective bargaining agency for the employes.

PENNA. LABOR NEWS GETS ARMY-NAVY 'E' AWARD

Harrisburg, Pa.—The Pennsylvania Labor News has been awarded the Army-Navy "E" flag for excellence in Blood Donor Service.

"We are mighty proud of this award," said M. M. Koh, editor of the AFL publication.

Kilgore Bill, Reported To Senate Faces Hot Fight From Conservatives

Liberal Unemployment Compensation Provisions Opposed By Reactionary Senators

Washington, D. C.—The liberal Kilgore-Murray industrial demobilization and reconversion bill, supported by the American Federation of Labor was approved by a 10 to 7 vote of the Senate Military Affairs Committee.

The division was along party lines, Democrats favoring and Republicans opposing the omnibus program.

With a provision for payment of unemployment compensation up to $25 a week until two years after the war for war workers made idle by reconversion and for increased musterings out pay for discharged members of the armed forces, the bill was put into conflict with the conservative George bill, reported to the Senate by the Finance Committee.

The George bill would leave the unemployment compensation program to the States and not supplement the payments with Federal funds, but it would guarantee the solvency of the States' funds, now totaling more than $5,000,000,000, with Federal non-interest loans.

Plans were made to take the Kilgore-Murray bill to the Senate floor at the same time the George bill is scheduled for consideration. Thus the reconversion program would be brought to the floor for a showdown between the liberal and conservative factions. Calls have been sent out to all Senators to be on hand.

The Kilgore-Murray bill would set up over-all machinery, headed by a Director of War Mobilization and Readjustment, vested with sweeping powers over other executive agencies and supported by regional advisory councils. It covers industrial demobilization and reconversion, retaining and re-employment of war workers and returning service men housing and public works.

It would allow transportation expenses up to $200 for a worker to move himself and his family to a new job location. Maintenance allowances of $50 to $100 a month, based upon dependency, would be provided for workers during six months of free vocational training for a new job.

Mustering-out pay for returning armed service personnel would rise to $200 for an unmarried person without dependents, to $350 for a married person with one dependent, and to $500 for one with two or more dependents, plus half of the base allowance for each year of active service and an additional half of service outside the continental United States. In some instances the mustering-out pay would total $1,050.

On an amendment by Senator Murray, the committee also incorporated in the bill a directive to the Secretary of Labor to "make a full study and investigation" of the extent to which the payment of annual wage systems would contribute to full employment and rising standards of living.

The study would include merits of such systems in various industries and possible means to be used by the government to take advantage of or otherwise in promoting adoption of annual wage plans.

Labor won a committee victory when a 10 to 7 vote defeated attempts by Senator Warren R. Austin of Vermont, who led the Republican fight to separate provisions of the bill setting up the over-all reconversion machinery from the unemployment compensation phase. Spokesmen for labor had expressed fears that if the unemployment payment title were separated it might be sidetracked.

Teachers Union Gains 7,000 Members

Chicago—Despite heavy losses to the armed forces and to war industries, the American Federation of Teachers has made a net gain of more than seven thousand members in the United States since Pearl Harbor, Irvin R. Kuenzli, secretary-treasurer of the AFL union announced.

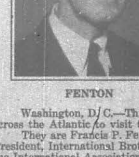
Mr. Kuenzli's report showed that the union's gains since the beginning of the membership of the union during the war years ago. During the last decade the union's membership has multiplied five times.

In addition, Mr. Kuenzli revealed, the British Columbia Teachers' Federation, representing all the teachers in that Canadian province, affiliated with the AFL recently. This organization, with between three and four thousand members, added to the domestic gains of the AFT, makes a total gain of more than ten thousand members among teachers. The action of the Canadian group is the first time in labor history that a Statewide or provincial organization joined the labor movement in a body.

"The American Federation of Teachers is one of the pioneer unions in the white collar field," Mr. Kuenzli said. "We are proud of the fact that it is also one of the most rapidly growing white collar unions in the world."

In a letter to AFL President Green, Mr. Kuenzli thanked Frank Fenton, AFL Director of Organization, for substantial assistance in organizing work among the teachers in various parts of the country.

Leaders Visit Battlefronts



FENTON

WEGENER

PETERSON

Washington, D/C.—Three representatives of the American Federation are winging their way across the Atlantic to visit the battlefields of France on invitation of the War Department.

They are Francis P. Fenton, AFL Director of Organization; A. L. Wegener, Assistant to the President, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; and Eric Peterson, Vice President of the International Association of Machinists. They were chosen to make the trip by AFL President William Green.

The Army has promised the AFL leaders a first-hand view of American weapons and war equipment in action. They will be taken to the front lines to witness with their own eyes the destructiveness of modern warfare and the necessity for constant replacements to sustain the force of the Allied offensive drives.

In addition, the AFL group will also be afforded the opportunity of discussing supply problems and the performance of equipment made by AFL workers with Army personnel from doughboys and flight mechanics to top-ranking generals.

This is the first time that labor has been invited by the armed forces to inspect the fighting fronts. It is believed that the experience will be valuable both to the War Department and to labor.

The AFL representatives, armed with the latest information on the progress of war production, will tell the G. I. Joes how the workers of America are backing them up with record-breaking quantities of tanks, guns, planes and equipment. At the same time they will have a fine opportunity to see what the soldiers need and what they have to go through and will be able to make a report on these matters to the men and women serving on the production front at home.

Labor Day Message

By GEORGE MEANY

Secretary-Treasurer, American Federation of Labor

GEORGE MEANY

An another Labor Day comes around, the millions of men and women who comprise American labor—together with the workers of all the nations that stand with us in the effort to put an end to the barbarism of Hitler Germany and fascist Japan—take justified satisfaction in the great changes which the war picture has undergone since twelve months ago. These changes—changes all for the better—could not have taken place, as the head of one of the United Nations has publicly acknowledged, had it not been for the astounding production in the war plants of the United States by America's production soldiers.

Our duty here at home is to do everything that lies within our power to guarantee that the victory is brought about sooner. For every day the lives of some young Americans are being snuffed out by Axie guns and bombs. Victory advanced by only one day will bring home safely to their families hundreds—perhaps many thousands—of Americans who otherwise would not return.

Some charge that there is complacency on the home front. Perhaps complacency does exist in some sections of the home front. If it exists anywhere it is not among the men and women who have been serving so valiantly on the production lines. The continuing flood of war production is the direct result of the unremitting, efficient and devoted efforts of America's wage-earners and constitutes proof positive that there is no complacency within the ranks of labor but, on the contrary, a clear realization of the importance of working hard and producing much.

Coupled with our feeling of joy at the progress of the United Nations along the highroad to victory over those who sought to enslave the world is a feeling of profound concern at the almost total failure to date on the part of industry and government to do anything more than talk about the problem of giving decent jobs in the days of peace to the many millions of ex-war workers and ex-servicemen. Of inconclusive and sweet-sounding prattle the American people have had a great deal, but of realistic, practical action to guarantee that war's end will not mean widespread unemployment there has been scarcely any.

For more than two years the American Federation of Labor has served repeated warnings to industry and government that full employment, achieved in time of war, must be made to prevail also in time of peace. This is not merely something for which workers and veterans will be thankfully hoping. On the contrary, this is something they will insist upon having.

Having assailed and bled to preserve the nation, having seen with their own eyes how prodigiously the country's industrial plant can produce for war, they will have no patience whatsoever with alibis allegedly explaining why full employment was not achieved.

On this Labor Day of 1944 we warn again that after the war there must be work for all who want work. For Americans of this decade, unlike those of the years 1929 and 1930, will not sell apples on street corners or queue up for free soup. When a thing is necessary Americans will put up with it cheerfully. But American of 1944 know that mass unemployment is not necessary, and knowing that it is not necessary they will not tolerate it.

The hour is late, but there is still time to make adequate provisions for peacetime production and peacetime employment of every war veteran and worker—there is still time if we move fast from here on.

Labor Day, 1944

By WILLIAM GREEN

President, American Federation of Labor

With victory over the enemies of democracy almost within grasp and the promise of peace drawing ever closer to fulfillment, the workers of America have deep cause for rejoicing on this Labor Day.

They know the satisfaction of a job well done—a gigantic job of production which has helped to crush the enemy and which has saved the lives of thousands of American boys fighting in the battlefronts.

They know the thrill of victory—the victory of free labor over the slave labor of the Axis forces.

And they are looking forward to an even greater thrill—the sight of their sons and daughters and loved ones returning home safe and sound when the fighting ends and peace is once more restored.

This Labor Day marks the fiftieth anniversary of the celebration of Labor Day as a legal national holiday.

Even in wartime, even though military requirements may compel us to remain on the job on this traditional holiday, we must not overlook the symbolic significance of this golden jubilee celebration.

For out of American Labor Day is the nation's formal acknowledgment of its debt to its loyal workers in peace as well as in war and an annual recognition of the rights and freedom and accomplishments of the men and women who toil for a living.

Likewise, our new inevitable victory in this war constitutes a guarantee that Labor Day will continue to be celebrated by free American workers in the future as a day of dedication to renewed efforts to improve living standards, widen the opportunities which our democracy affords and make peace a thing to live.

WILLIAM GREEN

For the forthcoming triumph of American democracy over the forces of fascism must be the forerunner of finer things to come, the beginning of a new era of world peace in which all the peoples of the world will be able to grow and expand and progress in an environment of friendship and security.

That is labor's foremost post-war goal—toward the achievement of which we invite all human beings of good will to join with us.

War has required the American people to make many harsh and heavy sacrifices. The coming of peace may likewise involve temporary hardship until the problems of adjusting industry and production to new economic conditions are met.

But the workers of America will face the challenge of the future as they have responded to the impact of war—with their heads held high and their spirit undaunted by any difficulties that may impede the march of achievement.

For the vision we see ahead is too glorious to be obscured by discouragement or delay. And we are resolved that our hard work and our prayers and our constant faith will win the peace just as surely as we are winning the war.

More Ships Needed

By ERNEST S. LAND,

Chairman, U. S. Maritime Commission

On this third Labor Day of World War II, the Nation salutes the Army and Navy, and rightly so. It is confidently expected, will drive forward with a flow of material that will unquestionably smash the military might of our enemies.

In the name of the Maritime Commission and of the War Shipping Administration, I honor particularly the men of the merchant marine and their brothers in arms in our shipyards and inland factories, for I know at first hand what they have done and the difficulties they have encountered.

The performance by our unbeatable team of shipbuilders and seamen has won the confidence of our front line commanders, our fighting men, and American public and our Allies, and the fear of our enemies.

But all that was yesterday—let us look at the job ahead. The enemy cannot be propped up. He is far from licked. The end is not in sight. We must throw the last ounce of our war power we can muster against him until the last Nazi and Jap fanatic bows in surrender.

On this Labor Day, 1944, I therefore call on each worker in our ranks for rededication to the job he has now, as well, and for such aid and inspiration as he can give to help recruit our manpower to victorious strength.

Notice To Labor Press!

Many of the photographs published on this page, illustrating stories for use in Labor Day Editions, are being mailed to you free of charge. The next two succeeding issues of the AFL Weekly News Service will carry additional material for Labor Day issues.